

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated November 5, 2003. Claims 1-24 are presented for examination, of which Claims 1, 9, and 17 are in independent form. Claims 1 and 3-24 have been amended to define still more clearly what Applicant regards as his invention. The abstract has been amended as to matters of form. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

A Claim To Priority and certified copies of the three priority documents for this application were submitted on January 18, 2001, as evidenced by a returned receipt postcard bearing the stamp of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, a copy of which is attached hereto. Applicant respectfully requests acknowledgment of the claim for foreign priority and the receipt of the certified copies.

Claims 1-24 were rejected solely under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,473,783 (Goshey et al.) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,996,003 (Namikata et al.).

The present invention is directed, in part, to an information processing apparatus that manages a network system that includes a plurality of such information processing apparatuses. Each apparatus has at least one shared device, such as printer or scanner, which is locally connected thereto and can be used by another information processing apparatus through the network (see Fig. 9).¹ In the recited information processing apparatus, a management means manages information of each shared device present in the network system, while a reception

¹ It should be understood that the claims do not exclude the presence of other information processing apparatuses on the network that do not have such shared devices; what is recited is that the network has a plurality of such apparatuses, that do have at least one shared device each.

means receives information about a shared device connected to another of the information processing apparatuses on the network system. A transmission means transmits information about a shared device connected to the recited information processing apparatus to another information processing apparatus on the network system, and a renewal means changes information about a status of a connected condition of the shared device displayed on a display device of the recited information processing apparatus in accordance with the information managed by the management means, based on the information received by the reception means.

The Office Action relies on *Goshey '783* as disclosing the claimed information processing apparatus except for the renewal means, and on *Namikata*, for the renewal means. Applicant has carefully studied the Office Action and the prior art, but finds himself unable to agree, for at least the following reasons.

Namikata relates to sharing a document in a TV conference system. In the *Namikata* system, one or more conference documents can be input as data, which can be stored. a conference document displayed at one terminal (having a transmitting unit) can be transmitted to a receiving side apparatus to permit the document to be displayed at the latter. Applicant submits, however, that nothing in *Namikata* would teach or suggest an information processing apparatus displaying *a status or connection condition of a shared device* that is locally connected to another information processing apparatus, as is recited in each of the independent claims. The passage at column 18, lines 24-33, of *Namikata*, particularly cited in the Office Action in this regard, does not relate to informing the network of the connection or disconnection of a shared device. Accordingly, even if it is assumed that *Goshey '783* teaches all that it is cited for, and even assuming that the proposed combination of those two patents would be permissible, the

result of such combination would not meet the terms of the independent claims, each of which is therefore deemed to be clearly allowable.

The other rejected claims in this application depend from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and, therefore, are submitted to be patentable for at least the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, individual reconsideration of the patentability of each claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,


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